

Fighting in Lebanon: Carrier Jets Go Into Action

U.S. Jets Bomb Syrian Positions in Lebanon; 2 Are Downed

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according to Lebanese security sources.

The downed American aircraft were a single-seat A-7E Corsair and a two-seat A-8E Intruder. The A-7E fell in flames into the coastal village of Juhieh, injuring at least eight people, setting two brick houses and at least seven cars on fire, and scattering pieces of the aircraft all over the neighborhood. The pilot parachuted safely from his plane and floated down into the Mediterranean, where he was rescued by the Lebanese Army.

The stricken A-8E Intruder crashed into a small wooded area in the middle of a group of camouflaged Syrian gun batteries near Kfar Salwan, 15 miles east of Beirut. Reporters who went to the scene found Syrian soldiers cowering on the wings of the wrecked aircraft, firing their guns in celebration and flashing the "V" for-victory sign.

Syrian soldiers and witnesses on the scene said the two pilots of the A-8E parachuted from their jet as it fell to the ground trailing smoke from its tail. A Syrian military spokesman confirmed that one of the pilots was captured alive, after having apparently sustained a leg wound. Witnesses told reporters that the second pilot was killed as a result of still unknown causes as he floated down to earth and hit the ground. However, there was no independent confirmation of the pilot's death.

The two American fighter jets were relatively slow-flying aircraft designed to carry heavy bomb loads and to engage in close support of ground troops. In both cases, witnesses said they saw the planes hit by what appeared to be Soviet-made surface-to-air missiles, most likely portable SA-7's that are standard issue among Syrian troops in Lebanon.

A Pentagon spokesman, Cmdr. Fred Leeder, said the American air attacks were in retaliation for the "heavy volume of anti-aircraft fire and at least 10 surface-to-air missiles" thrown up by Syrian batteries against two American F-14 Tomcats on a reconnaissance mission over Lebanon Saturday.

"The Syrian authorities clearly knew they were firing on U.S. reconnaissance aircraft, and the volume of fire makes it clear that it was not locally directed or random," he added. "This attack on U.S. reconnaissance aircraft represents a serious and deliberate threat to the multinational peacekeeping mission. Today's defensive strikes are clearly within the stated rules of engagement for our multinational force in Lebanon."

The 1,500-man American Marine contingent based at Beirut International Airport went on its highest state of alert immediately after the morning air strikes bracing itself for the reprisals, which came later in the day.

Late tonight—roughly 11 hours after the 8:30 A.M. American air raid—the Marine compound at Beirut International Airport came under heavy fire. The state-run Beirut radio said the firing came from areas under the control of Syrian-backed Druse militias in the hills to the east and south of the capital and was directed both against the marines and nearby Lebanese Army positions.

Marines Return the Fire

The shelling by the warship was the first by an American ship since Sept. 23. After the American ship fired its guns for several minutes, the shelling on the marines' position stopped.

The American planes could be heard roaring back and forth over Beirut shortly before 8:00 A.M. According to witnesses in Zouk Mikhael, the planes flew in pairs coming from the sea, over their targets in the mountains east of Beirut and then back out to sea—spew-



SYRIANS CELEBRATE: Syrian soldiers giving a victory sign while standing before the wreckage of a U.S. jet fighter at Kfar Salwan, Lebanon. A crew member, right, was carried away in a car, apparently hurt. The Pentagon said it was Navy Lieut. Mark A. Lange.

ing heat balloons in their wake to confuse the heat-seeking surface-to-air missiles.

According to both Syrian statements and the state-run Beirut radio, the American planes hit Syrian positions in Kfar Salwan, Falaqha, Hammana, Dahr el-Baidar, Jabal Knayset and Sofar, all of which are in the central Lebanese mountains between nine and

18 miles east of Beirut.

"The sky was full of smoke from the heat balloons and anti-aircraft fire," said Cherbelle, who watched the air strikes from his mountain home in Bilefaya, 15 miles east of Beirut. "I could hear the bombs hitting in the distance. They made at least two passes over the targets behind the mountains. As the planes were flying back out to sea, one

was hit by a missile, started smoking and headed down into Beirut."

The pilot of the single-seat A-7E Corsair ejected from his plane only a few hundred feet off the ground, witnesses said. Lebanese military sources said the American airman—identified as Cmdr. Edward T. Andrews, 41, of Virginia Beach—suffered a few bruises and a hand wound, which was

apparently related to his midair ejection. After being picked up from the sea by the Lebanese Army, he was quickly transferred by American helicopters to a Sixth Fleet carrier.

The A-7E Corsair was believed to have been hit by a SA-7 missile fired from around the Syrian-controlled villages of Arbaniyeh and Ain Soha, 7 miles northeast of Beirut. The villages are in the natural flight path of planes striking the mountain-top villages and flying back out to sea, and the Syrians are believed to have packed the area with ZSU-23 anti-aircraft guns and SA-7s. An Israeli Kfir was downed by a SA-7 fired from the same area during an air raid on Nov. 20.

The Lebanese civilians who gathered around the crash site just north of Beirut appeared to be stunned at the idea of the Syrians having shot down American planes. Since the Israeli invasion began on June 6, 1982, the Israelis have flown hundreds of sorties over Syrian and Palestinian positions in Lebanon and lost only three aircraft.

No Syrian Demands
There was no immediate indication of what demands, if any, the Syrians would make for the release of the captured American pilot.

Western diplomats and Arab analysts argued that today's American air strikes against the Syrians would have serious political implications for Lebanon and the Middle East at this time.

To begin with, the air raids came only two hours after President Reagan's speech from the White House. Gen. G. H. Barak of Lebanon had taken off from Washington after his meeting with President Reagan, and it will be very difficult for him to dispel the impression among the Syrians and Lebanese opposition groups that he was given advance warning that the attacks would take place and did nothing to prevent them.

This comes at a time when relations between President Reagan and President Hafez al-Assad of Syria were improving and hopes were rising that the Syrians might use their good offices with the Lebanese opposition group to convene another round of Geneva reconciliation talks.

U.S. Attack: Bombing Is Intended as a Warning for Damascus

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non without agreeing to leave themselves will not work. The Administration decided that the Syrians could not be persuaded of this unless the Israelis, the Americans and the Lebanese, each acting independently but in broad policy accord, stood up to them militarily and politically.

Administration officials said this policy carried with it possible risks—a direct Israeli-Syrian war, and even, at least remote, the possibility of more direct Soviet involvement on the side of the Syrian ally beyond the 7,000 Soviet troops and advisers now in Syria. Moreover, the officials said, the Syrians can be expected to try to step up pressure on the Gennayel Government through its Druse and Shi'ite supporters, which could cause further disarray in the Lebanese political scene.

Given these risks, the Administration went out of its way to depict the American raids in the most limited terms. Mr. Reagan and other officials insisted that there was no desire for a wider conflict with Syria, and that the raid was the result only of the Syrian shooting at the reconnaissance planes Saturday, something that was not reported in the American press.

But the expectation among American officials is that the Syrians and the Soviet-backed Lebanese opposition group will be publicly warned of American at-

tacks for weeks, will decide that it is unwise to seek negotiations on troop withdrawal rather than risk more military confrontation.

In the American view, the Syrians drew at the wrong conclusion in early September when Israel withdrew some of its troops from the Shuf region and American marines began to take casualties around Beirut. American intelligence at that time reported that Syrian leaders, bolstered by the introduction of Soviet-made missiles, determined confident that by remaining adamant and supporting anti-Government forces in Lebanon, they could take political control of Lebanon and set the Israelis and the Americans leave Lebanon on their own, in effect abrogating the May 17 agreement negotiated by the United States between Israel and Lebanon. The agreement calls for simultaneous Syrian-Israeli withdrawal.

That is why the visit to Washington last week by the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, and Defense Minister, Moshe Arens, was regarded as so important by American officials. Mr. Shamir, who had been in Beirut, agreed to coordinate their political and military policies more closely, although there was no specific joint planning by the two sides on the Lebanese front, according to officials from both countries.

'Common Goals'
Mr. Shamir publicly disclosed the general terms of the agreement when he said on American television today

that "by strong cooperation, by a close cooperation of the United States, Israel and the Lebanese Government, I think we will dissuade Syria from pursuing this goal of dominating all of Lebanon, because we, the United States and Lebanon have common goals on this issue."

If we together will coordinate our efforts not to allow the Syrians to dominate all of Lebanon and to encourage terrorist activities there," Mr. Shamir said. "I think we will get our goals."

Gennayel Is Promised Aid
In their talks with Mr. Gennayel, the Americans promised him more military and economic aid and urged him to begin sending his American-trained Army into the countryside to widen his Government's control outside of Beirut. Moreover, he was advised to bring more opposition leaders into the Government, to make them less interested in Syrian assistance, and to continue to demand Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in return for negotiations on steps to guarantee Syrian security, just as Lebanon had done with Israel.

Mr. Eagleburger, when asked on the ABC News program "This Week" how the Syrians could be persuaded to stop trying to dominate Lebanon, replied

that the United States hoped the Syrians would be impressed by a stronger Lebanese Government and Army and would also take into account the American and Israeli policies.

'Half a Loss'

Some American officials professed optimism last week that the Syrians were growing more wary of a wider military engagement and might be more willing to accept a political solution, which, as one official said, "They only get half a loss in Lebanon and not the whole loss." This view was fortified by the rumors from Damascus that President Hafez al-Assad of Syria is seriously ill, having possibly suffered a heart attack.

Today's officials would not predict whether the decision to use air power—as well as Navy guns for the first time since the end of September—would force the United States to increase the size of its forces in Lebanon. To do so, the Administration would have to tell Congress and seek adjustments in the War Powers Resolution, which was passed only after much debate.

Although the Administration treated the use of American air strikes today as a kind of normal defensive move, it was viewed as clearly anything but routine within the Government.

First Strikes in September

Mr. Reagan first authorized the use of air and naval power in mid-September to protect the marines in the Beirut area and to aid the Lebanese Army, which was fighting for its life in the

Shuf Mountains. But although the naval guns were used, no plane strikes were in fact carried out for fear that this would lead to a dramatic increase in the fighting.

Even after 239 marines were killed by a truck bomb on Oct. 23, Mr. Reagan held off on a retaliatory strike against the Iranians and the Shiite Lebanese believed involved in it, and allowed the Israelis and the French to respond alone for similar attacks on their troops.

But now, with the certainty that the Israelis are willing to use military force against the Syrians, the Administration feels it can put pressure on the Syrians and had no reason not to retaliate when Syria refused to heed an earlier warning not to fire on the American reconnaissance planes.

Questions About Gennayel

The weakest link in the new policy appears to be the Lebanese Government and army. Questions remain about whether Mr. Gennayel can withstand the anticipated increase in attacks from the Syrians and their backers, and whether his army can resist new fighting with the Government in the size of the American military force or a dramatic rise in Israeli military actions against the Syrians.

There are also questions as to whether the other members of the international force in Beirut—the British, the French and the Italians—will be willing to stay much longer if they see the situation becoming an Israeli-American conflict against the Syrians.

Reagan Says U.S. Will Respond To Any New Attacks by Syrians

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shot down over Syrian-held territory. Tonight, after news had been received from Washington that pro-Syrian militia forces had attacked American marines in Beirut, killing eight and wounding two, a spokesman for the Defense Department was asked whether the Administration had plans for reinforcing the United States contingent in Lebanon.

He replied: "I know of none." Other officials, however, said that the bombing raid had been planned in great secrecy. Still others recalled that public affairs officers had been kept in the dark about plans to invade Grenada.

An Administration official said the attack on the American marines was carried out by Druse and Shi'ite forces pressed by the Syrians. He said the attack was "probably in response" to the American bombings.

But he said that increasing the number of marines in Beirut was not being considered. Further responses by the United States could be carried out by naval shelling or planes, he said, but "the presence of more troops on the ground is not likely to be very helpful."

Decision by President

The official said Mr. Reagan had decided in meetings on Thursday and Friday to "respond vigorously" in Lebanon, not only to retaliate for the attack on American forces but also to encourage Lebanese forces to defend their own territory.

Earlier in the day, the Under Secretary of State, Lawrence S. Eagleburger, said in a television interview that today's air raid was "not part of our plan to push Syria out of Lebanon" but a response to a Syrian aircraft attack

lack on American reconnaissance planes on Saturday.

Mr. Eagleburger, interviewed on the ABC News "This Week" television program, asserted that if the question was, "Are we prepared to go to war with Syria in Lebanon, I am prepared to do so."

But he said that "I hope that Damascus" get a message last night," referring to the shoot of Syria. The message, he said, is, "If we don't get shot at, we won't shoot at them." He also said that "if we're the Syrians, I suspect I would take yesterday's events fairly seriously."

Legislation Limits Deployment

In September, Congress adopted a resolution under the War Powers Act that limits the deployment of American forces in Lebanon to 18 months. Several senators have urged a new resolution cutting that time to four to six months.

The latest developments in Lebanon came at a time when the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John W. Vessey Jr., was in Europe along with Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci. Mr. Vessey was in Europe for a meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Thayer was Acting Secretary and Gen. John A. Wickham, the Army Chief of Staff, was Acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

At the Defense Department, officials said the American bombing raid on three Syrian anti-aircraft and command posts was within the rules of engagement approved by the President in early September. That change permitted American forces to use naval gunfire and aerial strikes to protect the marines at the Beirut airport.

Naval gunfire had already been employed before the resumption of naval gunfire attacks today, suggested that officials said that American naval commanders had sought specific approval

Transcript of the President's News Session

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4.—Following is a transcript of President Reagan's news session on the South Lawn of the White House this afternoon concerning the events in Lebanon, as recorded by the White House:

OPENING STATEMENT

For some time now we have been flying regular and routine reconnaissance flights with unarmed planes in Lebanon as a part of the protection and defense of our forces there. We notified the Syrians of this some time ago, assuring the planes were unarmed; this was purely for reconnaissance. There have been some instances of firing at those planes now and then from unknown sources. But yesterday, two such reconnaissance missions were fired upon by literally hundreds of anti-aircraft and a combination of surface to air mis-

siles which were coordinated in several sites by the Syrians. Early today we responded to this unprovoked attack by striking back at those sites from whence had come the attack.

We don't seek hostilities there. Our mission remains what it was to help stabilize the situation in Beirut until all the foreign forces can be withdrawn and until the Government of Lebanon can take over the authority of its own territory. But we are going to defend our forces there. And this was the reason, or the purpose of the mission earlier today.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Downed Airmen

Q. Are you going to negotiate to get the two pilots back? Are there two lost or unaccounted for?

A. Yes. We've had this report that two of the pilots, or the crew of one plane, or two planes were shot down. One of the pilots, as you know, was rescued that landed outside of that area. Two inside. I don't have any further word except that we are attempting to negotiate their release. There have been rumors or reports of some kind of the loss of one, but we have no substantiation of that.

Syria's Position

Q. What do the Syrians say about it? Have they said anything?

A. I'm going to find all that out because we're just — our embassy has been notified and they're making contacts.

War With Syria

Q. Mr. President, are they escalating the war, sir?

Q. Are we at war with Syria? Do you fear a military confrontation with Syria at this point?

A. Do we fear a military confrontation with Syria? Well, I think that's the wrong word. The question is wrong. We don't want such a thing, we don't desire it. But we are and I think this will answer your question over here at the same time about if it happens again, we will fire back — we haven't fired at anyone unless it has been to return fire against attacks made upon our forces. If any of our forces are attacked, we will respond. We're going to defend our personnel that is there.

Israeli Role

Q. Is this coordinated with the Israelis, Mr. President?

A. What's that?

Q. Is this coordinated with the Israelis, sir?

A. I heard some rumors to that effect and I suppose the situation of President Gennayel and Prime Minister Shamir both being here, and the fact that they have responded with fire to some areas led people to suppose that. No, we knew nothing of their operations and there was no contact with them regarding ours. And the Prime Minister has responded to that question and said they were only aware of it after it happened.

Assad's Health

Q. Do we think President Assad is still running Syria? Do we think President Assad is in good shape to run Syria?

A. That's — your guess is as good as mine. We don't know. The conflicting stories that are coming out there. The attempt now to portray him as being active and on the scene. We really have no assurance one way or the other.

Q. Do we think that has had an effect on this firing at our aircraft?

A. I wouldn't know. All I know is that this was coordinated by the Syrians.

Retaliatory Attack

Q. Are the two pilots POW's now? Does this complicate American efforts to negotiate the Syrians out of Lebanon?

Q. How seriously does this retaliatory attack complicate hopes to negotiate a Syrian exit from Lebanon?

A. Well, I hope that it doesn't make it any more difficult. I hope that the reaction would be the other — the other way. But I think it's important to continue with the mission that we embarked upon some time ago, and that is to bring peace to that area.